Dec. 10, 1957 K. M. DAVIS 2,815,595

INDEX TAB

Filed March 16, 1956

FIG. 1

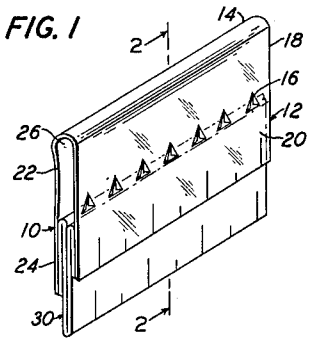


FIG. 5

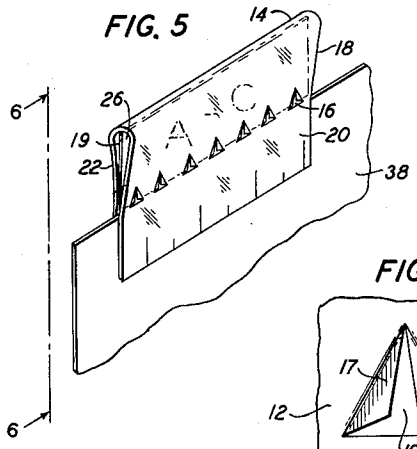


FIG. 7

FIG. 2

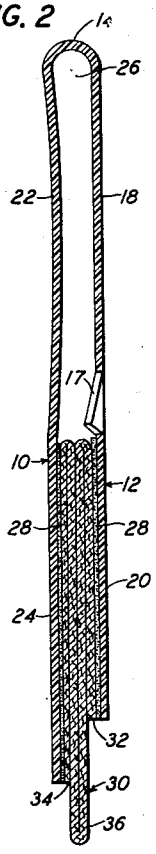


FIG. 3

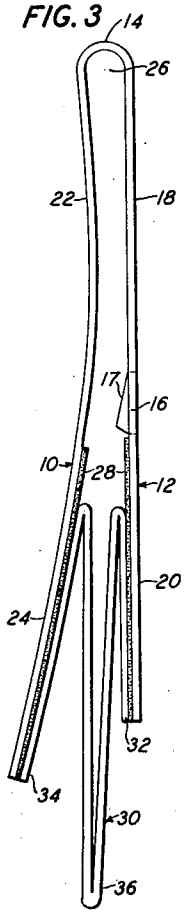


FIG. 4

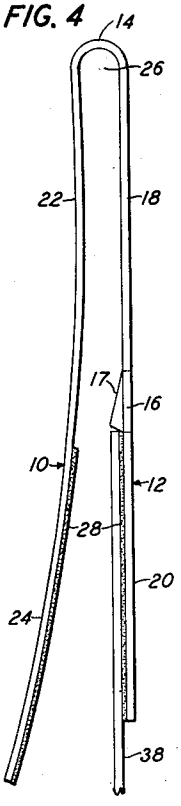
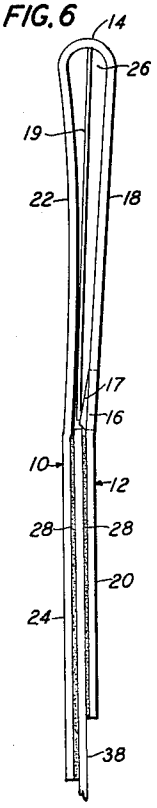


FIG. 6



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2,815,595

Patented Dec. 10, 1957

2,815,595

INDEX TAB

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Application March 16, 1956, Serial No. 571,952

4 Claims. (Cl. 40—23)

This invention relates to index tabs of the type used for the indexing of data. More particularly, the present invention relates to index tabs constructed of flexible transparent plastic material adapted for attachment to cards or sheets and which have a tab projecting outwardly from the edge of the card or sheet to form a sheath for a label which carries an index designation.

Index tabs of the general type set forth above are constructed with two oppositely located spaced sidewalls adapted to straddle a card or sheet to which they are to be attached and to form the sidewalls of a sheath for carrying an index label. Difficulty has heretofore been experienced in uniformly positioning such index tabs on cards or sheets to provide a sheath of uniform size. If the sidewalls embrace too much of a card, the sheath formed thereby is too small to receive the index label. On the other hand, if the sidewalls of the index tab are not positioned far enough down on a card, the sheath formed thereby is too large for the index label and the danger of the label accidentally slipping out of the sheath is greatly increased. Furthermore, in the latter case, the tab itself projects too high above the card and is in danger of being damaged in the opening and closing of the drawer in which the card is filed.

Difficulty has also been experienced with such index tabs, particularly when attached to the pages of a book or folder, through the accidental displacement of the index label inserted in the sheath as a result of the handling of the book or folder. This difficulty is particularly serious when such index tabs are attached to a page or sheet of considerable thickness, thus making the spacing between the sidewalls of the sheath relatively great.

Users of such index tabs have also experienced difficulty in inserting index labels into the sheath formed by the two sidewalls of the tab because it has heretofore been necessary to use a label having a thickness nearly equal to the spacing between the sidewalls in order to reduce the possibility of accidentally displacing the label after it has been inserted.

In general, index tabs of the type set forth above are attached to cards or sheets by two methods. The inside surfaces of the two oppositely located sidewalls which straddle a card or sheet may be coated with a water soluble adhesive which the user moistens before attaching the index tab to an intended card, or the inside surfaces of the two oppositely located sidewalls may be coated with a non-drying pressure sensitive adhesive which is provided with a protective covering. In this case, the user must remove the protective covering from the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings before attaching the index tab to an intended card. Regardless of which of the above methods is utilized, it is necessary for the user of the index tab to insert his finger between the two sidewalls and forcibly separate them to enable the tab to be placed astraddle a card or sheet. If water soluble adhesive coatings are utilized, the sidewalls must also be forcibly separated to enable the adhesive coatings to be moistened. If the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings are utilized, the sidewalls must be forcibly separated to facilitate the removal of the protective coverings from these adhesive coatings. With both methods, care must be exercised to prevent the sidewalls from contacting each other after the water soluble adhesive coatings have been moistened or after the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings have been exposed. If the sidewalls contact each other after the adhesive coatings have been prepared for attachment they may lock in an inoperative condition, requiring separation before the index tab can be placed astraddle the edge of a card or sheet.

Index tabs of the general type set forth above may advantageously be manufactured and sold in strips which are then cut into index tab units of desired lengths by the user. Heretofore, it has been necessary for the user to individually measure each index tab unit in the strip or roll prior to cutting to make certain that it is cut to the desired length.

An object of the present invention is the provision of an improved index tab of the general type set forth above which overcomes the aforementioned disadvantages and difficulties.

Another object of the present invention is to facilitate the positioning and attachment of such index tabs on cards or sheets.

A further object of the present invention is to facilitate the insertion of index labels in such index tabs.

A still further object of the present invention is to increase the durability and dependability of index tabs of the general type set forth hereinabove.

A feature of the present invention relates to a stop means in index tabs of the type set forth above to assure uniformity of projection above cards or sheets to which the index tabs are attached and to provide index label sheaths of uniform size.

Another feature of the present invention relates to a gripping means in such index tabs for gripping index labels inserted into the index tab label sheath to reduce the possibility of accidentally displacing labels from said sheath. This gripping means in the index tab of the present invention also provides an additional advantageous feature in that it makes the index tab label sheath adaptable for receiving index labels of a variety of thicknesses.

A further feature of the present invention relates to means for rendering the above index tab stop means and index label gripping means adjustable, thereby adapting the index tab for attachment to cards or sheets having a variety of thicknesses.

A still further feature of the present invention relates to the provision of the three aforementioned features by a single means.

Anoher feature of the present invention relates to means operable under a slight external compressive force for forcibly separating the free edges of the two oppositely located sidewalls of such index tabs, thus eliminating the necessity for the index tab user to insert his finger therebetween. In accordance with this aspect of the present invention, the moistening of adhesive coatings or the removal of the protective covering from pressure sensitive adhesive coatings is facilitated, the placement of such index tabs astraddle cards or sheets is facilitated and the danger of the two sidewalls contacting each other after the adhesive coatings have been moistened or after the protective coverings have been removed from pressure sensitive adhesive coatings is reduced.

Still another feature of the present invention is directed to a novel index tab structure wherein means are provided to facilitate the insertion of index labels in the index tab label sheath.

An additional feature of the present invention relates to means for facilitating the cutting of index tabs into units of desired lengths from a strip or roll.

The foregoing and other objects and features of the

present invention may be more eradily understood from the following description of an illustrative embodiment thereof when read with reference to the accompanying drawing in which:

Fig. 1 is a view in perspective of an illustrative embodiment of the index tab of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an enlarged sectional view taken along line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a view in end elevation of the index tab in its open position and with the protective covering for the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings partially removed;

Fig. 4 is a view in end elevation of the index tab in its open position, with the protective covering completely removed from the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings and with the index tab in placement position with respect to a record card or sheet;

Fig. 5 is a view in perspective of the index tab in position on a record card or sheet and shows an index label in the index label sheath;

Fig. 6 is a view in end elevation as taken along lines 6—6 of Fig. 5 and shows the position of the index label in the index label sheath; and

Fig. 7 is an enlarged front view of one of the perforations, the flaps of which form the index tab stop means and index label gripping means of the present invention.

The illustrative embodiment of the present invention disclosed in the drawing and described hereinafter is an improved index tab utilizing pressure sensitive adhesive coatings for attachment to cards or sheets. It is to be understood, however, that the present invention is not limited to index tabs utilizing this method of attachment to cards or sheets and that other methods such as stapling or water soluble adhesive coatings may be utilized.

Referring to the drawings for more specific details of the present invention, the index tab comprises a sheet or strip of flexible transparent plastic material such as, for example, cellulose acetate, which is folded upon itself, as by a molding operation, to provide spaced sidewall portions indicated generally at **10** and **12** which are interconnected by top portion **14** at the fold line. As shown in Fig. 1, sidewall portion **12** has a plurality of spaced openings or perforations **16** located an equal distance from the top portion **14** along the length of the index tab. Fig. 7 shows an enlarged front view of one perforation **16** in sidewall portion **12**. As shown in Figs. 1 and 7, perforations **16** are formed by making an inverted T-shaped cut, as by a stamping operation, in sidewall portion **12** and by inwardly bending the resulting right-angled corners to form flaps **17**. Perforations **16** with flaps **17** serve as a demarcation between the index label sheath wall portion **18** and index tab leg portion **20** in sidewall portion **12**. Sidewall portion **10** may be considered to comprise an index label sheath wall portion **22** and an index tab leg portion **24** as shown in Fig. 2. An index label sheath or pocket is defined by top portion **14** and wall portions **18** and **22**.

The tab structure, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2, is in its normal or unstressed position and it will be noted that leg portions **20** and **24** are substantially parallel and in slightly spaced relation to each other. It will be further noted that leg portion **24** is slightly longer than leg portion **20**, the purpose of which will be described below. It will also be noted that sidewall portion **22** of the index label sheath has a slight inward curvature toward sidewall portion **18**. The purpose of this will also be described later.

In the illustrative embodiment of the present invention, the inner surfaces of leg portions **20** and **24** of the index tab are provided with an adhesive coating **28** of the non-drying pressure sensitive type, and the index tab is provided with a removable protective covering indicated generally at **30** for adhesive coatings **28**. Protective covering **30** is adapted to protect these surfaces from contacting each other prior to usage of the index tab. Protective covering **30** may advantageously be unitary in form and, as shown in the drawing, comprises side flaps **32** and **34** in covering engagement with the adhesive coatings **28** and having dependent from their upper ends a fold or pleat indicated at **36** extending downwardly between flaps **32** and **34** and outwardly of the lower end of leg portions **20** and **24** of the index tab.

As pointed out hereinbefore, the index tab of the present invention may advantageously be attached to index cards or record sheets by means of water soluble adhesive coatings. If this type of adhesive is utilized for coatings **28** shown in the drawings, then protective covering **30** will not be required.

To facilitate the moistening of adhesive coatings or the removal of protective coverings from pressure sensitive adhesive coatings and to facilitate the positioning and attachment of the index tab of the present invention, means operable under a slight external manual compressive force are provided to forcibly separate the leg portions **20** and **24**. The material used in constructing the index tab of the present invention is quite flexible. However, rigidity is obtained in the forming operation. This rigidity in the formed index tab, in addition to the fact that leg portion **24** is slightly longer than leg portion **20** and that sheath sidewall portion **22** has a slight inward curvature, permits the user to grasp the lower edge of leg portion **24** with the index finger, placing the thumb at top portion **14** and, by a slight compressive force exerted therebetween, forcibly separate leg portion **24** from leg portion **20** at the lower edges thereof. As a result of this slight compressive force, the inward curvature of sheath sidewall portion **22** will become deeper or more pronounced and will cause leg portion **24** to separate from leg portion **20** as shown in Fig. 3. While in this position, protective covering **30** may be stripped from pressure sensitive adhesive coating **28** by pulling tab **36** downwardly. If water soluble adhesive is used for coating **28**, this coating may be moistened while leg portions **20** and **24** are separated as shown in Fig. 3.

While continuing to exert this slight compressive force keeping leg portion **24** separated from leg portion **20** as shown in Fig. 4, the index tab may be placed astraddle a card or sheet **38** so that the inwardly protruding flaps **17** formed from perforations **16** rest on the top of card **38**. Because the leg portions **20** and **24** are forcibly kept apart by this slight compressive force, the danger of the two leg portions contacting each other after the pressure sensitive adhesive coatings are exposed and while the tab is being positioned on the card **38** is greatly reduced. Because the flaps **17** form a stop for the index tab, no special care need be exercised in placing the index tab astraddle the card or sheet and the index tab may be quickly and easily positioned. After positioning the index tab astraddle card **38** as shown in Fig. 4, leg portion **20** will adhere to card **38** by means of the pressure sensitive adhesive coating **28** which was exposed when protective covering **30** was removed. The thumb and forefinger may then be released, causing leg portion **24** which is also covered with a pressure sensitive adhesive coating **28** and which was exposed with covering **30** was removed, to adhere to the opposite side of card **38**, thus affixing the index tab firmly on the card. To more firmly affix the index tab to card **38** as shown in Fig. 6, a slight pressure may be exerted on the outside surfaces of leg portions **20** and **24**.

In addition to forming a stop to facilitate the positioning of the index tab on card **38**, the inwardly protruding flaps **17** formed from perforations **16** also serve as a gripping means for holding the index label inserted into the index label sheath securely in place. As shown in Fig. 6, index label **19** is forced upwardly against top portion **14** and against the inner surface of sheath sidewall portion **22** through pressure exerted by the spring action of flaps **17**, thus reducing the possibility that index label **19** will be accidentally displaced from the sheath.

Because the material from which the index tab is formed is quite flexible and because rigidity is obtained in forming the index tab, flaps **17** will exert this spring action against the index label, and through this spring action an additional advantageous feature is obtained. The inwardly protruding corners which form flaps **17** will compress if the index label is attached to a very thin card or sheet by the application of pressure to the outside surfaces of sheath sidewall portions **18** and **22**. This renders the index tab adjustable and adaptable for attachment to cards or sheets having a wide range of thicknesses.

An additional advantageous feature is obtained from the slight inward curvature of sheath sidewall **22**, that being to facilitate the insertion of index labels into the sheath formed by sidewall portions **18** and **22** with top portion **14**. As shown in Fig. 5, the sheath opening is larger at the top than at the bottom near the card to which the index tab is attached. This larger top opening will permit the user to insert the bottom corner of the index label into this larger top opening and then slide the label forward and downward into the sheath.

It is advantageous to manufacture index tabs of the type described herein in strips or rolls. To facilitate the cutting of these strips or rolls into index tab units of desired lengths by the user, the index tab of the present invention is provided with a scale printed on the lower part leg portion **20** as shown in Fig. 1. This scale may, for example, be a ¼ inch scale and will permit the user to cut index tab units of uniform desired lengths without the necessity of measuring each individual index tab to be cut. If the index tab utilizes the pressure sensitive adhesive method of attachment to cards or sheets where a protective covering **30** is provided, this scale may be located on the lower part of protective covering **30** as shown in Fig. 1.

It is to be understood that the above-described embodiment is but illustrative of the present invention; numerous other arrangements and embodiments may be devised by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An index tab comprising a unitary strip of stiff but flexible transparent material deformably folded upon itself to form two slightly spaced and oppositely located members in approximately parallel relationship joined at the fold line, one of said members being slightly wider from said fold line to the free edge thereof than the other of said members, said one of said members having a portion with memory thereof towards a slight inward curvature to the other of said members intermediate the bend and the edge of the shorter of said two members, the stiff but flexible character of said members adapting said index tab operative upon the application of an external manual compressive force between the free edge of said one member and said fold line to forcibly separate said members at the free edges thereof.

2. The index tab defined in claim 1 wherein said other of said members has a plurality of inverted T-shaped perforations intermediate said fold line and the free edge thereof and longitudinally spaced along said other of said members parallel to said fold line, the right-angled segments in said other of said members resulting from each of said perforations being deformably bent toward said one of said members.

3. An index tab comprising a unitary strip of stiff but flexible transparent material deformably folded upon itself to form two slightly spaced and oppositely located members joined at the fold line, said members being an unequal width from said fold line to the free edges thereof and defining an index label sheath for said index tab and a pair of unequal length legs adapting said index tabs for attachment to the opposite sides of a card or sheet, the portions of said members defining said legs being substantially parallel to each other, the portions of at least one of said members defining said index label sheath having a slight inward curvature toward the other of said members, the stiff but flexible character of said members adapting said index tab operative upon the application of an external manual compressive force between said fold line and the free edge of the longer of said pair of legs to forcibly separate said legs at the free edges thereof and the resiliency resulting from the stiff but flexible character of said members causing said leg members to return to their parallel position when said manual compressive force is removed.

4. The index tab defined in claim 3 wherein one of said members has a plurality of inverted T-shaped perforations intermediate said fold line and the free edge thereof and longitudinally spaced along said one of said members parallel to said fold line, the right-angled segments in said one of said members resulting from each of said perforations being deformably bent to apply a compressive force toward the other of said members, the lower edges of said right-angled segments adapted for cooperation with the edge of a card or sheet to which said index tab is attached and the corners of said right-angled segments adapted to grip an index label inserted in said index label sheath.

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